

21 August 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Discussion with Fred K. Kirschstein, Member
House Select Committee Staff

1. On Monday, 19 August I was interviewed by Fred K. Kirschstein, a member of the House Select Committee Staff. He wanted to talk in a very general way about intelligence collection and the utility to OSR of various sources of data. [REDACTED] Chief, Resources and Requirements Staff, OSR also attended and participated.

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2. Mr. Kirschstein began by asking me to explain OSR's purpose and the nature of its work. He followed with general questions about the utility of the three broad classes of intelligence collection--Sigint, Photint, Humint. Were they useful? Which was most important? Was clandestine collection necessary? Was there too much collection? Was there enough collection of political data? Economic data? Etc. Mr. Kirschstein invited us also to express our own criticisms of collectors and the collection process.

3. I responded by explaining that all three types of data collection were essential and that advances in one type of collection capability did not necessarily reduce or eliminate the need for continued collection of the other types. I noted some of the problems that collectors and processors have. They must select from great masses of materials which are collected by technical systems and they must grapple with the difficulties of protecting sensitive sources while getting the data disseminated to as many potential

users as possible. I pointed out that collectors and users must maintain a dialog and must appreciate each others difficulties if the total process is to be effective. I said that when we went to the collectors with questions and problems, I believed in most cases they tried sincerely to be cooperative and responsive.

4. Mr. Kirschstein asked us about clandestine collection by the Army. I answered that in general we know little or nothing about the people and methods involved in the clandestine acquisition of specific information and so are not able to evaluate such activities. I volunteered that overt collection by military attaches has improved substantially over the past several years and is considered a valuable and productive source of useful information. Mr. Kirschstein asked us to rank the quality of attache reporting by military service. We pointed out that there is a single integrated system for selecting, training, assigning, supporting and tasking attaches, which is administered by DIA. As for individual attaches, some are better than others, but no particular service seemed to provide better personnel than another.

5. Mr. Kirschstein summarized our discussion by stating he had the impression that we considered the collection programs to be generally satisfactory and without serious problems. I replied that he oversimplified our position. The collection process is extremely complex as are the intelligence questions and issues themselves. It is not possible to address specific problems and difficulties in a discussion where many topics are considered briefly and at a high level of generality. I said also that our mission was to produce military intelligence and we were not in a position to talk knowledgeably about the quality of the management or the cost effectiveness of the collection programs of another organization, for example, NSA. To be valid such assessments would require much more information about internal operations than is available to us.

6. Toward the close of our conversation I told Mr. Kirschstein that I felt a bit frustrated by the interview because I had the feeling that we probably were appearing to be evasive when in fact that was not our intent. I was aware that our responses were often hesitant, but this was because the questions were so broad and general that they were difficult to grapple with.



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